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(54) **APPARATUS FOR PROVIDING POWER MANAGEMENT IN DATA COMMUNICATION SYSTEMS**

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G01N 33/00 (2006.01)

(52) **U.S. Cl.** **422/68.1**; 422/500; 422/511; 422/520

(58) **Field of Classification Search** 422/68.1, 422/500, 511, 520

See application file for complete search history.

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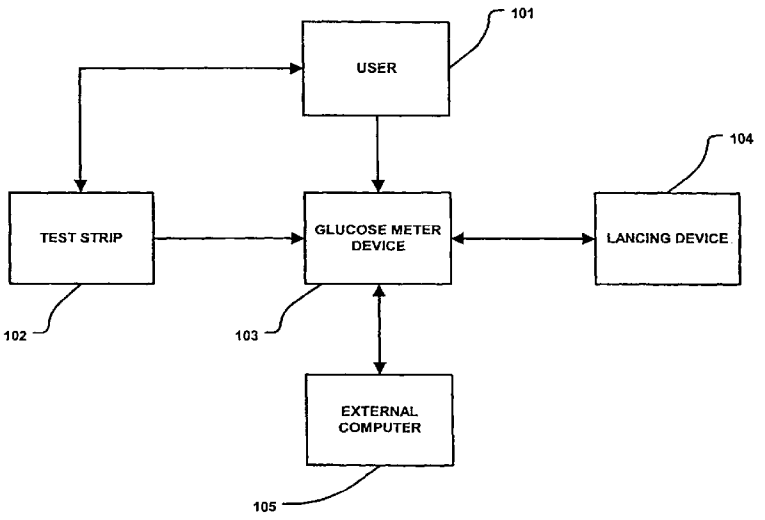
(57) **ABSTRACT**

A blood glucose meter having a compact housing, a display unit disposed on the housing, the display unit including a display light source to illuminate the display unit, an input unit disposed on the housing, the input unit configured to provide input functions for the blood glucose meter, and a power source provided within the housing for providing power to the blood glucose meter, where the housing includes a port integrated on said housing configured to receive a blood glucose test strip, and corresponding methods of measuring blood glucose meter is provided.

34 Claims, 6 Drawing Sheets



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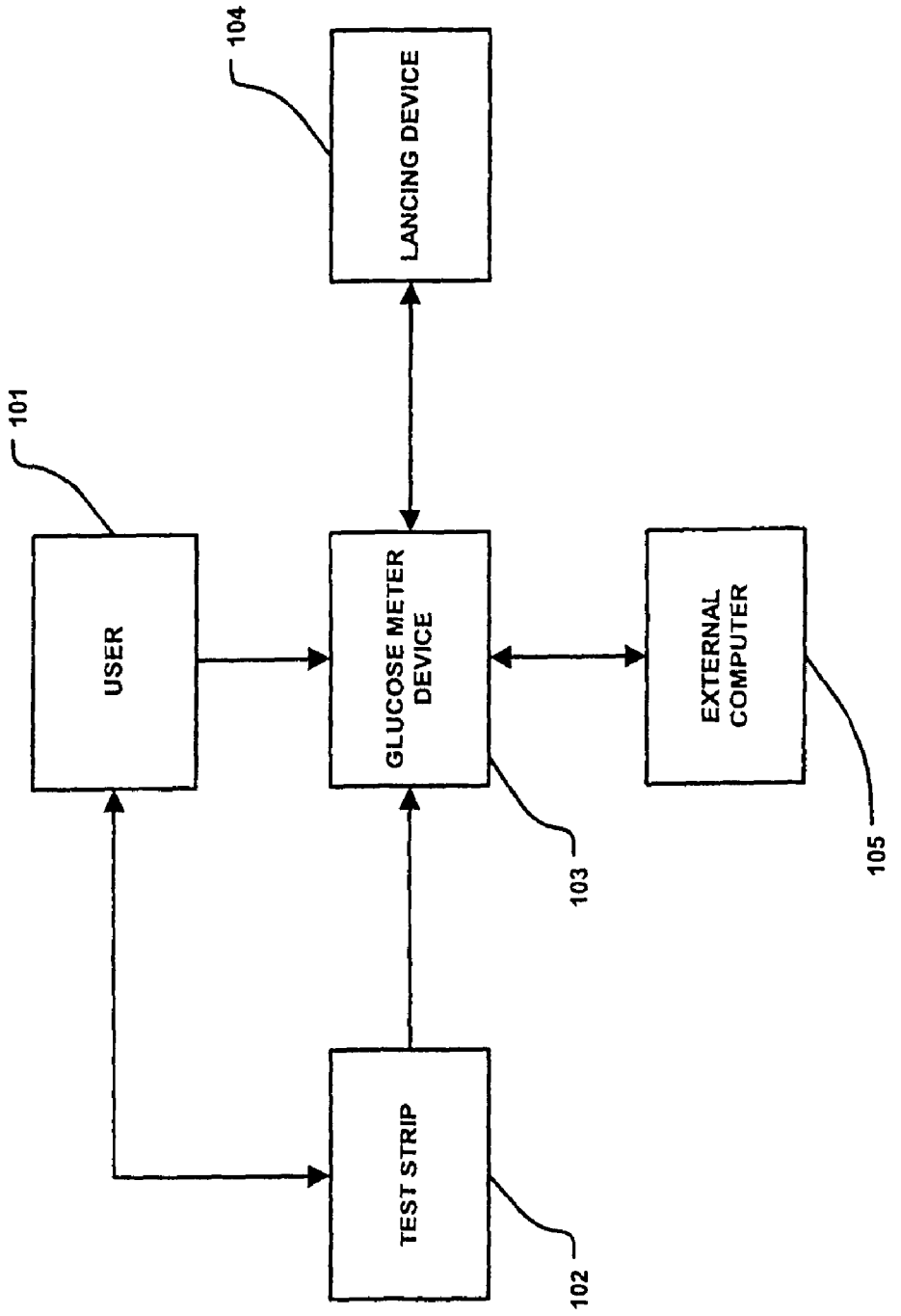
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101
USER
GLUCOSE METER DEVICE
EXTERNAL COMPUTER
103
105
100
TEST STRIP
102

FIGURE 1

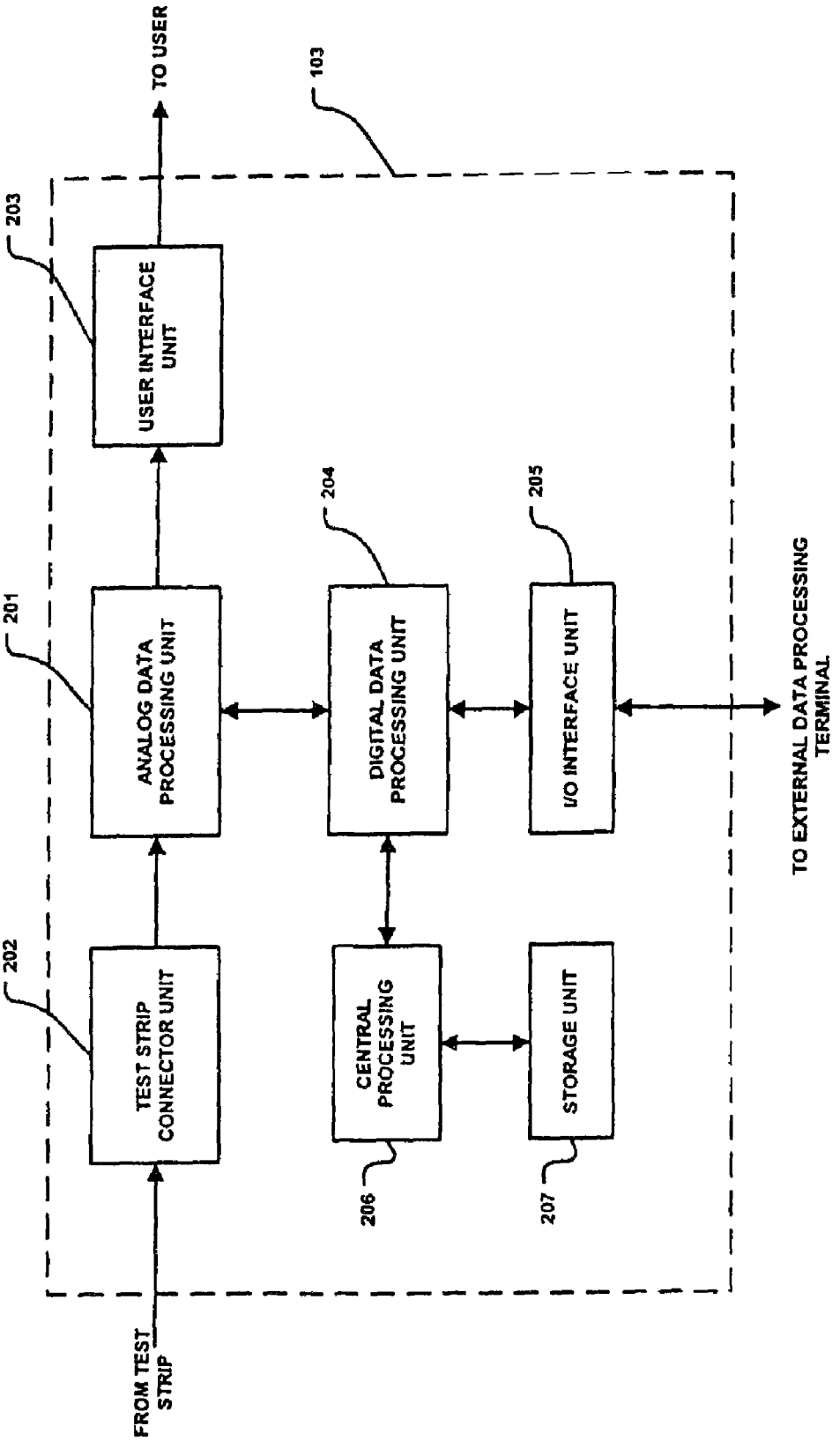
TO USER
103
203
USER INTERFACE UNIT
204
205
201
ANALOG DATA PROCESSING UNIT
DIGITAL DATA PROCESSING UNIT
I/O INTERFACE UNIT
TO EXTERNAL DATA PROCESSING TERMINAL
202
TEST STRIP CONNECTOR UNIT
CENTRAL PROCESSING UNIT
STORAGE UNIT
206
207
FROM TEST STRIP

FIGURE 2

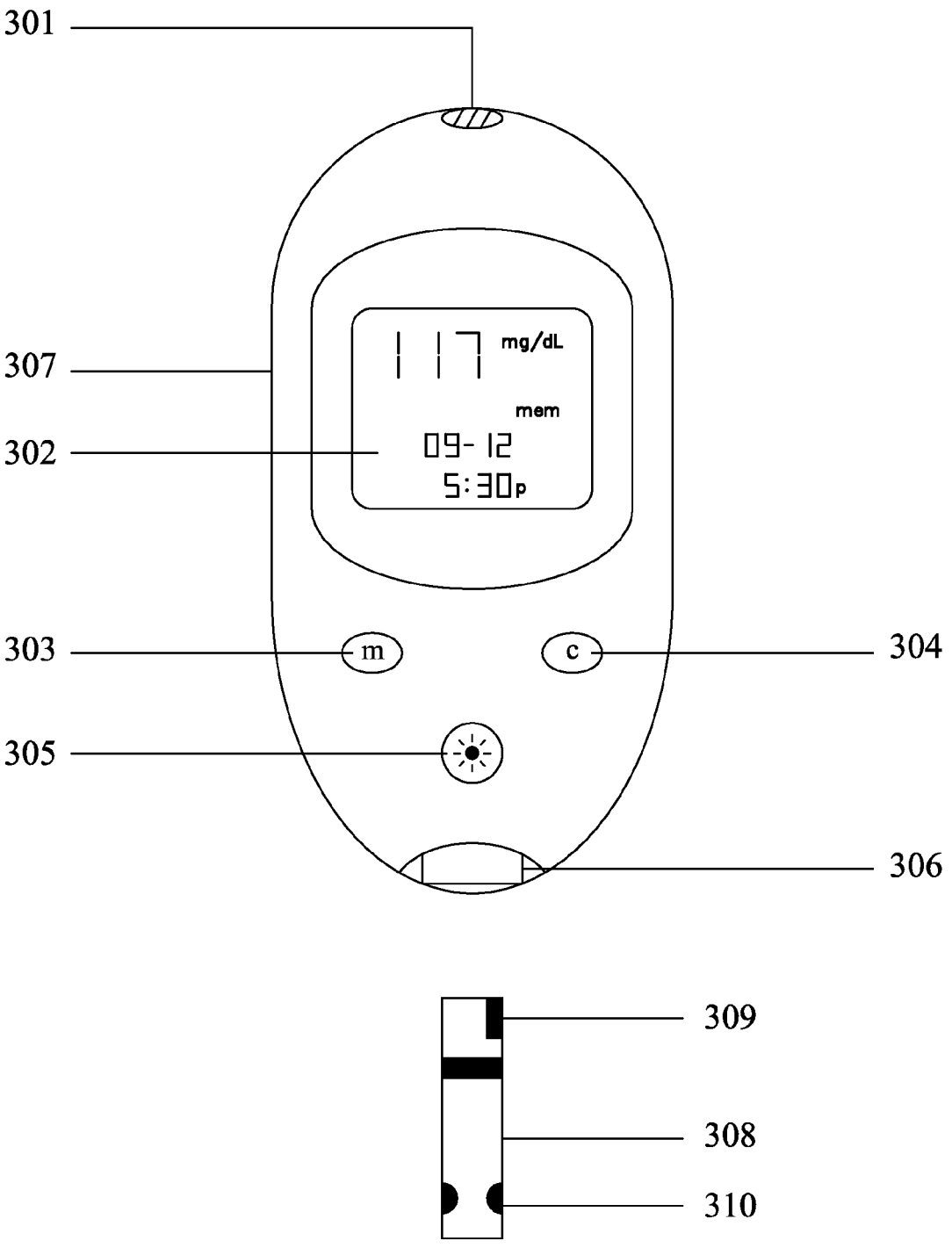
301
307
302
303
304
305
306
309
308
310
117
mg/dL
mem
09-12
5:30p
m
c

FIGURE 3

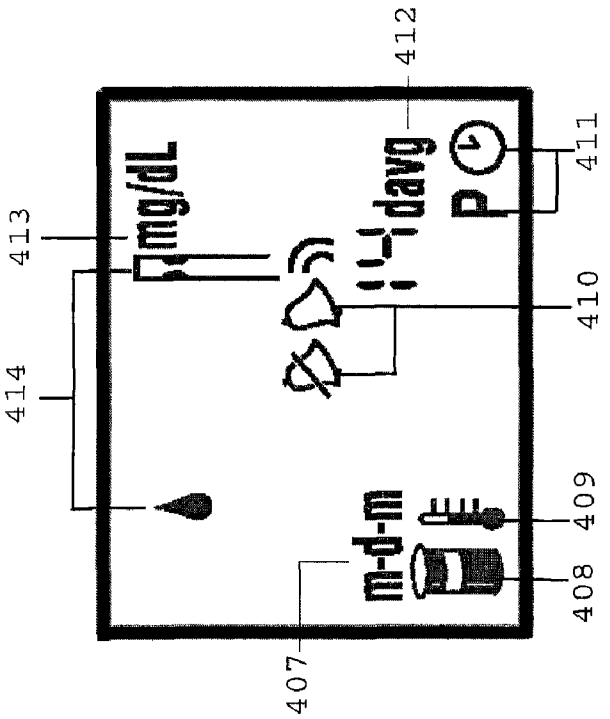

FIGURE 4B

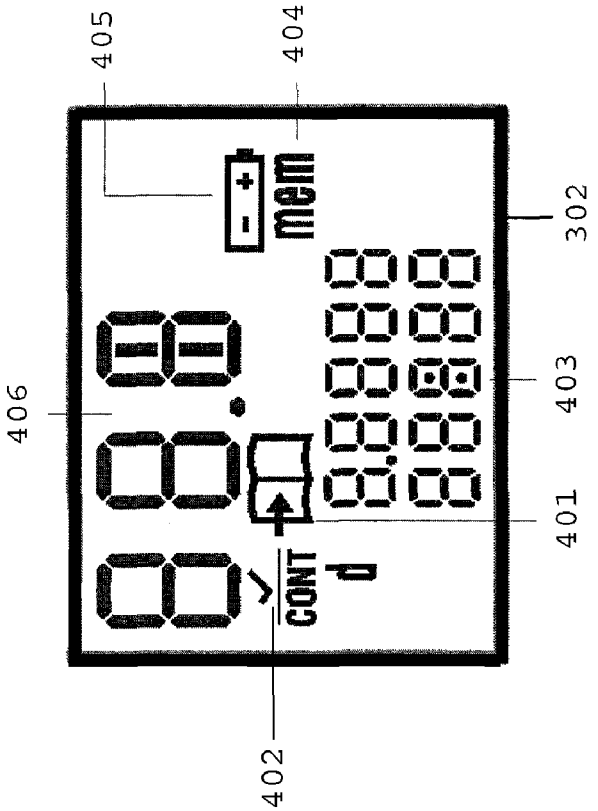

FIGURE 4A

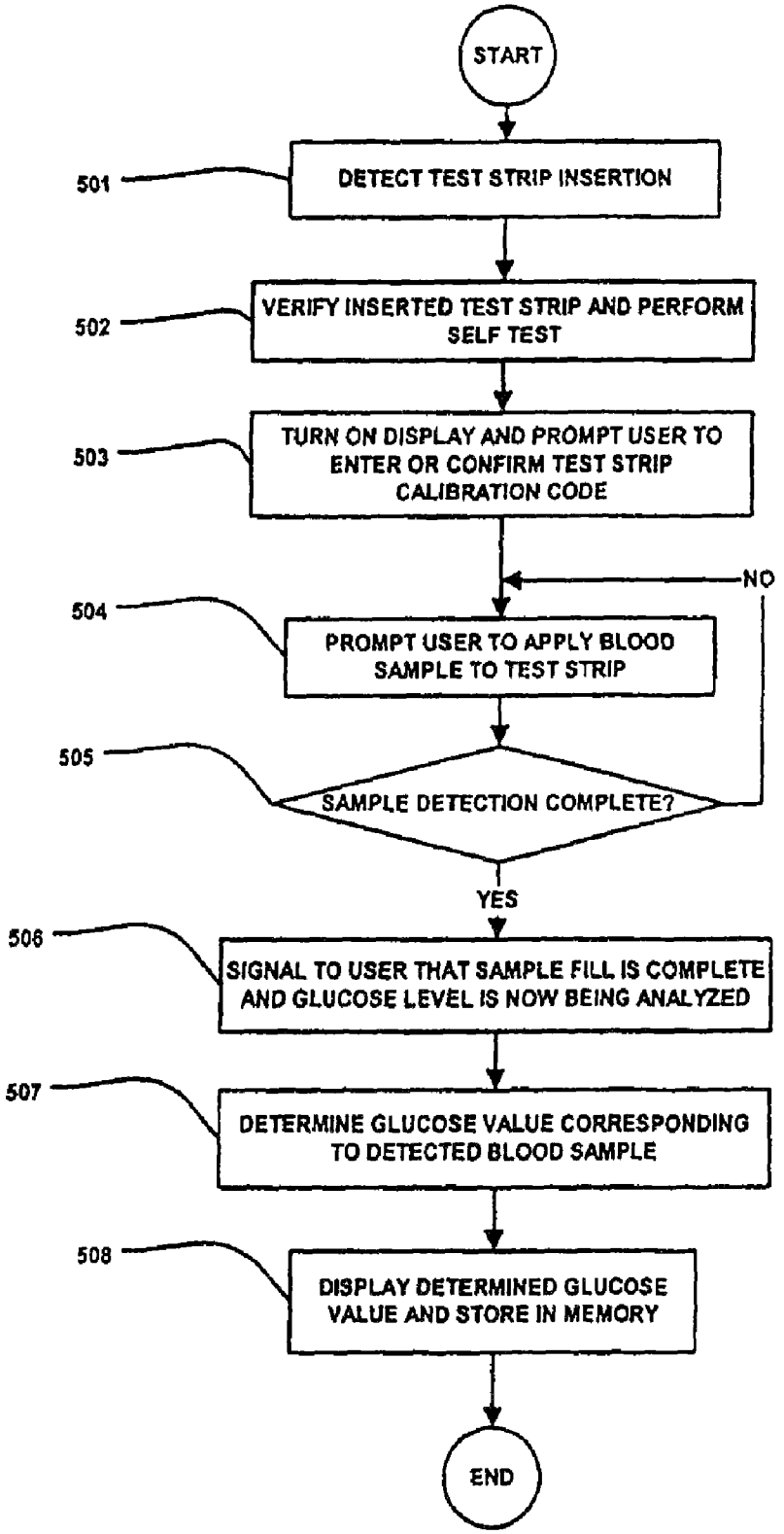
START
501
DETECT TEST STRIP INSERTION
502
VERIFY INSERTED TEST STRIP AND PERFORM SELF TEST
503
TURN ON DISPLAY AND PROMPT USER TO ENTER OR CONFIRM TEST STRIP CALIBRATION CODE
NO
504
PROMPT USER TO APPLY BLOOD SAMPLE TO TEST STRIP
505
SAMPLE DETECTION COMPLETE?
YES
506
SIGNAL TO USER THAT SAMPLE FILL IS COMPLETE AND GLUCOSE LEVEL IS NOW BEING ANALYZED
507
DETERMINE GLUCOSE VALUE CORRESPONDING TO DETECTED BLOOD SAMPLE
508
DISPLAY DETERMINED GLUCOSE VALUE AND STORE IN MEMORY
END

FIGURE 5

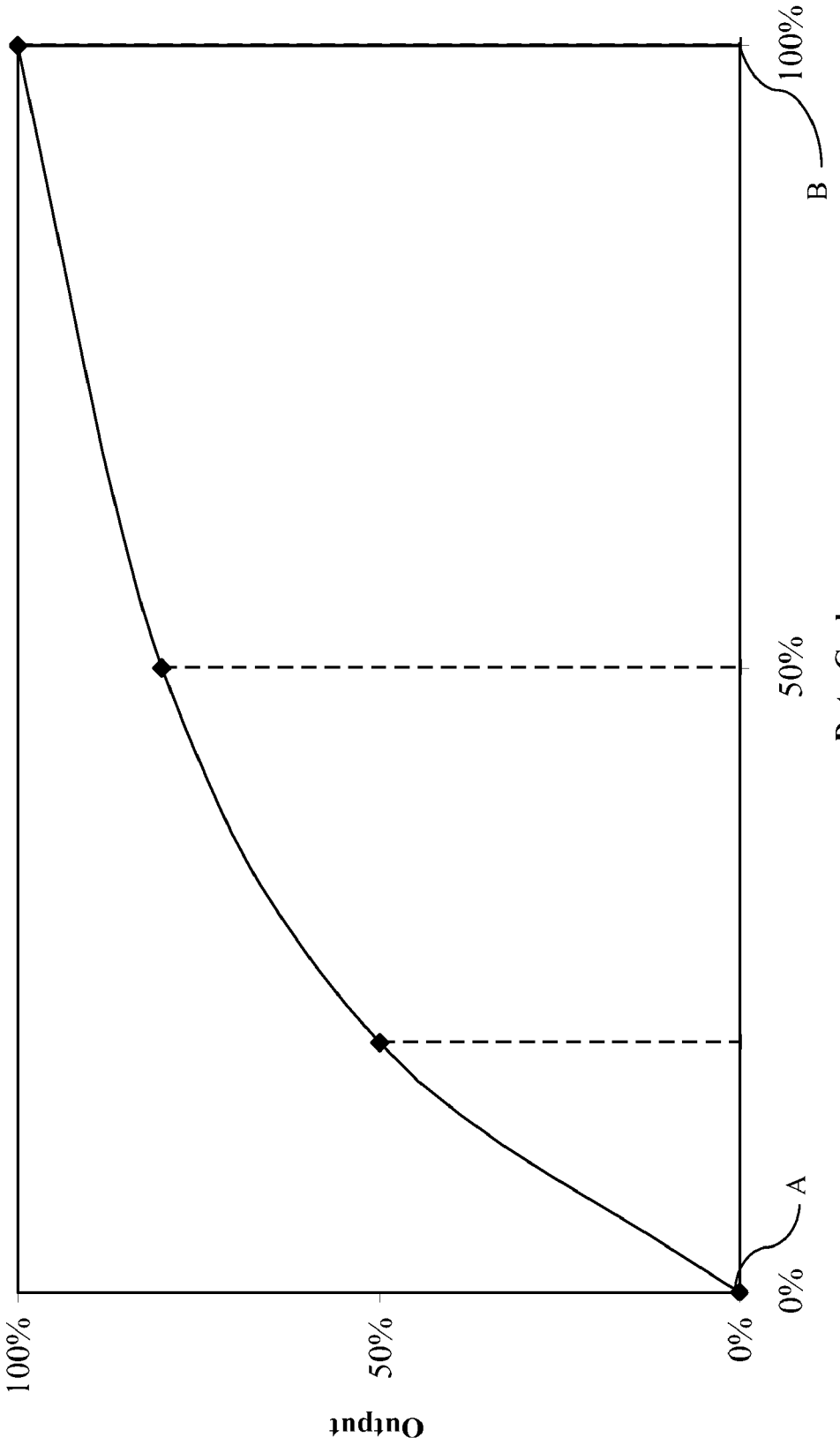

FIGURE 6

APPARATUS FOR PROVIDING POWER MANAGEMENT IN DATA COMMUNICATION SYSTEMS

RELATED APPLICATIONS

This application is a continuation application of pending U.S. patent application Ser. No. 10/861,626 filed Jun. 4, 2004, which claims priority under 35 USC §119 to Provisional Application No. 60/478,436 filed Jun. 12, 2003, entitled "Method and Apparatus for Providing Power Management in Data Communication Systems", the disclosures of each of which are incorporated herein by reference for all purposes.

BACKGROUND

The present invention relates to data monitoring systems. More specifically, the present invention relates to portable analyte monitoring systems. More specifically, the present invention relates to a compact, blood glucose meter for use in a glucose monitoring system to self-monitor glucose level in whole blood, as an aid to disease management, and also by healthcare professionals as an aid to monitor the effectiveness of diabetes treatment.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The market for glucose monitoring systems in the United States as well as globally is rapidly increasing, as better health education and early detection of diabetic conditions through regular check ups have increased the percentage of the diabetic population who undertake the task of monitoring their diet and daily activities based on the detected level of blood glucose using glucose monitoring systems. One group of such rapidly increasing segment of the population is children with diabetic conditions who are advised to monitor their blood glucose levels.

While miniaturization has been a factor of recent designs in the glucose monitoring systems and the glucose meters, the physical constraints of the components of such systems have established a certain size limitation. As such, the larger and bulkier the device, the less desirable and convenient for the device to be carried around or used and operated by the patients, especially children.

In view of the foregoing, in accordance with the various embodiments of the present invention, there is provided a blood glucose meter which is designed to be substantially more compact than presently available commercial blood glucose meters, which configuration that is much more amenable to usage and portage by younger diabetic patients such as children.

More specifically, in one aspect of the invention, the blood glucose meter is configured to include a LCD backlight and a flashlight features which will assist the patient in reading the metered glucose level in low-light testing areas such as in theaters, low ambient light restaurants, areas, outdoors during non-daylight times and so on, as well as a light source to guide the insertion and removal of the test strip, which may include the usage of a light emitting diode. Indeed, as the light source (e.g., the LED) may be pulsed and still display substantially the same light output as one which is turned on in steady state, the battery life of the glucose meter device may be prolonged since the pulsed LED light source requires significantly less power (and thus draining the battery at a much slower rate) than when the LED light source is maintained at the on position. Indeed, in one embodiment, the central processing unit of the glucose meter device may be configured to control the switching on and off of the light source as well as the level of light intensity by, for example, adjusting the duty cycle and the period during which the light source is configured to be turned on.

Additionally, in accordance with a further aspect of the invention, the blood glucose meter may include a numerically displayed clock with a date display which may be visible when the meter is not in use. Moreover, the clock feature in yet a further embodiment of the present invention may include an alarm which would allow the users to set alarm reminder for performing blood glucose level testing, where the alarm feature may include one or a combination of an auditory alarm, a visual alarm alert, and a vibration alert mode.

Indeed, a blood glucose meter in accordance with one embodiment of the present invention includes a compact housing for a blood glucose meter, a display unit disposed on the housing, the display unit configured to display information related to the blood glucose meter, an input unit disposed on the housing, the input unit configured to provide input functions for the blood glucose meter, and a power source provided within the housing for providing power to the blood glucose meter.

The display unit may include one of a liquid crystal display (LCD), a touch sensitive screen, and a plasma display unit.

The display unit may also include a light source to illuminate the display unit, where the light source may be configured to provide a backlight function and a flashlight function of the display unit.

The light source in one embodiment may be configured to be pulsed at a frequency greater than 60-100 Hertz. Moreover, the light source may further configured to have a peak wavelength of approximately 570 nanometers.

In one embodiment, the light source may include a light emitting diode (LED), and more specifically, a yellow-green LED.

In a further embodiment, the housing may include a port integrated on the housing configured to receive a blood glucose test strip.

The port may include a light source that may be configured to substantially illuminate the port to assist in the insertion and/or removal of the blood glucose test strip.

In yet another embodiment, the display unit may be configured to illuminate upon detection of a blood glucose test strip insertion into the port. Further, the display unit may be configured to remain illuminated until the test strip is removed from the port.

The input unit in one embodiment may include an on/off switch.

A blood glucose meter in accordance with another embodiment includes a compact housing for a blood glucose meter, a display unit disposed on the housing, the display unit including a display light source to illuminate the display unit, an input unit disposed on the housing, the input unit configured to provide input functions for the blood glucose meter, and a power source provided within the housing for providing power to the blood glucose meter, where the housing includes a port integrated on said housing configured to receive a blood glucose test strip.

The port in one embodiment may include a port light source, the port light source configured to substantially illuminate the port to assist in the insertion and/or removal of the blood glucose test strip.

Additionally, in an alternate embodiment, the port light source may be integrated with the display light source.

A method of measuring blood glucose level in accordance with yet another embodiment of the present invention

includes the steps of providing a compact housing, disposing a display unit on the housing, the display unit including a display light source to illuminate the display unit, disposing an input unit on the housing, the input unit configured to provide input functions for the blood glucose meter, providing a power source within the housing for providing power to the blood glucose meter, where the housing includes a port integrated on said housing configured to receive a blood glucose test strip.

These and other features and advantages of the present invention will be understood upon consideration of the following detailed description of the invention and the accompanying drawings.

INCORPORATION BY REFERENCE

Applicants herein incorporate by reference U.S. Pat. No. 6,616,819 issued Sep. 9, 2003 entitled "Small Volume In Vitro Analyte Sensor and Methods", U.S. Pat. No. 6,560,471 issued on May 6, 2003 entitled "Analyte Monitoring Device and Methods of Use", and U.S. Provisional Application No. 60/437,374 filed Dec. 31, 2002 and U.S. Published Application No. 2004/0186365 published Sep. 23, 2004 both entitled "Continuous Glucose Monitoring System and Methods of Use", each assigned to the Assignee of the present application for all purposes.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. **1** is a block diagram illustrating an overall glucose monitoring system in accordance with one embodiment of the present invention;

FIG. **2** is a block diagram illustrating a glucose meter device shown in FIG. **1** in accordance with one embodiment of the present invention;

FIG. **3** illustrates the glucose meter device of FIG. **2** in accordance with one embodiment of the present invention;

FIGS. **4**A and **4**B illustrate the display screen of the glucose meter device in accordance with one embodiment of the present invention;

FIG. **5** is a flowchart illustrating the procedure for performing a blood glucose test using the glucose meter device in accordance with one embodiment of the present invention; and

FIG. **6** illustrates the output LED power level as a function of the power state in accordance with one embodiment of the present invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

FIG. **1** is a block diagram illustrating an overall glucose monitoring system in accordance with one embodiment of the present invention. Referring to the Figure, the glucose monitoring system **100** in accordance with one embodiment includes a glucose meter device **103** configured to receive a test strip **102** which is used to collect the blood sample for determining the blood glucose level of the user **101**. The lancing device **104** is used to draw the blood sample from the user **101** to be collected onto the test strip **102**. In one embodiment, the lancing device **104** may be used on the user's fingers, forearm, upper arm, hand, thigh or calf, for example. Moreover, the glucose meter device **103** and the system **100** is configured such that a very small blood sample size such as, for example, approximately 0.3 microliter of sample blood, is necessary to determine a corresponding blood glucose level.

As can be further seen from FIG. **1**, the glucose meter device **103** may be operatively coupled to an external computer **105** which may include, in one embodiment, a server terminal connected to a data network, a stand along desktop or laptop computer for use by the user's physician or care provider (or the user herself), a personal digital assistant (PDA) which is operatively configured to store and/or further, to communicate with a data network to transmit and receive patient data related to the glucose level detected from the collected blood sample, for further diagnosis, analysis and the like.

In one embodiment, the user **101** may provide the configuration parameters as well as calibration code to the glucose meter device **103**, while the glucose meter device **103** may be configured to output signal prompts to the user **101** such as to indicate a sample fill signal and a sample result signal, and further, to output display the resulting measured blood glucose level from the sampled blood from the user **101**. Furthermore, after the user **101** is lanced with the lancing device **104** to generate sufficient amount of sample blood, the test strip **102** is provided in contact thereto (i.e., to the sample blood) while the test strip **102** is operatively coupled to the glucose meter device **103**. In this manner, the glucose meter device **103** may in one embodiment be configured to alert the user that the amount of blood sample on the test strip **102** is sufficient to determine the corresponding blood glucose level.

In one aspect of the present invention, the glucose meter device **103** may be configured to make clinical measurements of glucose in whole blood in the range for approximately 20 to 500 mg/dL. Furthermore, as discussed in further detail below, the glucose meter device **103** may be configured to include a display unit which is configured to operate as a user interface to visually interact with the user **101** to prompt for data input, or alternatively, to provide information to the user **101** corresponding to the user's operation of one or more functions of the glucose meter device **103**. In one embodiment, the display unit of the glucose meter device **103** may include a LCD display screen which may further be configured, in an alternate embodiment to include a touch-sensitive pad so as to allow the user **101** to input data therethrough. Moreover, in a further embodiment of the present invention, the display unit of the glucose meter device **103** may be configured to include a backlight feature which would permit the user **101** to operate the glucose meter device **103** in a dark ambient setting such as in a theater, outdoor at night, and the like.

FIG. **2** is a block diagram illustrating a glucose meter device shown in FIG. **1** in accordance with one embodiment of the present invention. Referring to FIG. **2**, the glucose meter device **103** in accordance with one embodiment of the present invention includes a central processing unit **206** operatively coupled to a digital data processing unit **204**. The central processing unit **206** is further operatively coupled to a storage unit **207** which, in one embodiment, may include one or more of a data storage unit, a random access memory unit and a read-only memory unit. As can be further seen from the Figure, the digital data processing unit **204** is further operatively coupled to an input/output (I/O) interface unit **205** which, in one embodiment, is configured to interface with the external computer **105** (FIG. **1**).

Moreover, in the glucose meter device **103**, there is provided an analog data processing unit **201** which is configured to detect and process analog signals and which is further operatively coupled to the digital data processing unit **204** for digital data processing of the detected and processed analog signals received from the analog data processing unit **201** in one embodiment of the present invention. Referring back to FIG. **2**, the analog data processing unit **201** of the glucose meter device **103** is further configured to operatively couple

to a test strip connector unit **202** which is configured to engage with a test strip **102** (FIG. **1**) when inserted into the glucose meter device **103**. Thereafter, the analog data processing unit **201** as mentioned above is configured to detect the signal level from the collected blood sample received from the test strip **102** (FIG. **1**) via the test strip connector unit **202**, and to transmit that detected and analog processed data to the digital data processing unit **204** for further data processing.

Referring yet again to FIG. **2**, there is also shown a user interface unit **203** provided to the glucose meter device **103**. As can be seen, the user interface unit **203** is operatively coupled to the user **101** (FIG. **1**) to receive input data or instructions therefrom, or alternatively, to output the processed and/or generated information to the user **101**. More specifically, in accordance with one embodiment of the present invention, the user interface unit **203** may include a display unit, an input device such as an input keypad, or any other equivalent device which may provide substantially the same functionality as the input device such as an input keypad.

Additionally, the display unit of the user interface unit **203** may include an LCD display unit which is also capable of providing backlighting so as to permit the user to view the displayed information on the backlit display unit of the user interface unit **203** in dark ambient settings. Moreover, in an alternate embodiment of the present invention, the user interface unit **203** may also include a flashlight feature which, upon activation by the user, is configured to emit a consistent light beam to assist the user in the operation of the glucose meter device **103** and/or the lancing device **104** in dark surroundings. Further, the flashlight feature may also be configured to include a timer function such that the flashlight is configured, in one embodiment, to automatically turn off after a predetermined period of time has elapsed. In this manner, the power source for the glucose meter device **103** (FIG. **1**) may be conserved in the cases where the user **101** leaves the flashlight feature on the glucose meter device **103** on.

Referring yet again to FIG. **2**, the user interface unit **203** in accordance with a further embodiment of the present invention may include a speaker unit configured to output audio signals. More specifically, in one aspect of the present invention, the user **101** may be alerted or reminded of one or more time specific events or reminder such as the next time the user **101** needs to take a blood glucose level measurement. Rather than relying solely upon the user's memory, the glucose meter device **103** may be configured with an alarm feature operatively engaged with a timer function such that, in addition to displaying the current time information on the display unit, the glucose meter device **103** may be configured to generate and output an audible sound for each specific event or reminder which the user **101** has pre-programmed into the glucose meter device **103**. Moreover, in a further embodiment, the audible alarm output (or a series of audible tones as may be selected by the user) may be simultaneously generated with the backlight feature of the glucose meter device **103** such that for each of use, the user is able to view information displayed on the display unit of the user interface unit **203** substantially immediately without the need to perform extra steps such as turning on the backlight function of the glucose meter device **103**. In the preferred embodiment, the meter allows the user to set up to four separate alarms to go off every 24 hours at a particular time to remind the user to test her blood glucose level. Preferably, the volume of each alarm may be set independently.

Referring back yet again to FIG. **2**, in one embodiment of the present invention, the central processing unit **206** is configured to perform a plurality of functions to maintain, calibrate and operate the glucose meter device **103**. More specifically, upon power up of the glucose meter device **103** when the power source such as the batteries, are placed in the respective section of the device housing, under the control of the central processing unit **206**, the glucose meter device **103** is configured to perform a power on/reset sequence to initialize the various aforementioned components of the glucose meter device **103** to the necessary configuration settings. Upon successful completion of the power on/reset sequence, the central processing unit **206** is then configured to enter the glucose meter device **103** into a default operation mode (for example, the clock mode) as discussed in further detail below. More specifically, in one embodiment, the central processing unit **206** is configured to access the storage unit **207** to retrieve the corresponding power on/reset sequence instruction set from the storage unit **207** (for example, in the ROM portion and/or the RAM portion thereof). Moreover, in one embodiment, the central processing unit **206** is configured to perform and complete the aforementioned power on/reset sequence within approximately 500 mseconds.

In one aspect, the central processing unit **206** of the glucose meter device **103** may be configured for operating the meter device **103** in one of the following modes of operation—the clock mode (the default mode discussed above), the test mode, the configuration mode, and the measurement log review mode. The default clock mode is configured in one embodiment to display the time/date information as configured by the user **101**. The test mode includes operations for the user to perform blood glucose measurements, the configuration mode includes functions for the user to select user preferences for configurable parameters of the glucose meter device **103**, and the measurement log review mode allows reviewing of the glucose measurements stored in the meter device **103**.

In one embodiment, when the glucose meter device **103** enters a non-clock mode of operation, the meter device **103** may be configured to display a self-test screen that illuminates all segments of the display unit in the user interface unit **203** prior to operating in the selected mode of operation. Moreover, the glucose meter device **103** may be configured to exit all operation modes after exceeding a predetermined period of non-activity/idle time (for example, 2 minutes) such as no switch activity, test strip activity, or display activity, for example.

Additionally, the central processing unit **206** of the glucose meter device **103** is configured such that, upon detection that there was a loss of power (for example, battery removal), the internal date is set to the last recorded date, and in the case where there is no valid recorded dates, the central processing unit **206** is configured to set the internal date to a predetermined date such as Jan. 1, 2002, for example. Likewise, upon detection of the loss of power, the internal time in one embodiment is reset to 12:00 am until a further time when the user resets the internal time. Moreover, the blood sample test data collected during the period of power loss is configured to be flagged with a "lost time" flag and the corresponding lost power internal date and time discussed above. Upon re-application of power to the glucose meter device **103**, in one embodiment, the user may be prompted (e.g., blinking signals displayed on the user interface unit **203**) to reset the time and date information in the default clock mode.

Referring still again to FIG. **2**, in the test mode of operation of the glucose meter device **103** in one embodiment, the correct insertion of the test strip **102** (FIG. **1**) engaged into the

test strip connector unit **202** of the meter device **103** is detected, and upon removal of the test strip **102**, the meter device **103** is configured to enter the default operation mode. In this manner, the glucose meter device **103** may be configured to automatically enter into the test mode of operation upon the correct insertion of the test strip **102**. Alternatively, the glucose meter device **103** may be configurable to enable manual initiation of the test mode of operation (such as, for example, by the user's manual operation of the test mode switch (not shown) of the meter device **103**.

During the test mode of operation, if a faulty operation is detected, the glucose meter device **103** is configured to generate and output a corresponding respective message as such. Examples of such faulty operation includes, but not limited to, the detection of a used test strip, insufficient blood sample on the test strip, incorrect insertion of the test strip into the test strip connector unit **202** of the meter device **103**, or when the coulometer circuits are not ready for sample processing. The outputted message to the user alerting of the faulty operation may include an audible sound, a visual display, or a combination of both.

Upon successfully collecting sufficient blood sample for processing from the user **101** (FIG. **1**), the glucose meter device **103** is configured to process the collected sample, and to generate a corresponding blood glucose data for output display to the user **101** on the user interface unit **203**. The blood glucose data may be, for example, displayed in units of mg/dL or in units of mmol. Moreover, in one embodiment, the meter device **103** may also be configured to display the time and date information corresponding to the blood glucose level test. Moreover, the central processing unit **206** is further configured to store the processed and displayed blood glucose data in the storage unit **207**.

Referring still to FIG. **2**, in the configuration mode of operation, in one embodiment of the present invention, the user **101** may select and input certain predetermined parameters into the glucose meter device **103** to configure the meter device **103** for subsequent use thereafter. For example, such configurable parameters include the displayed date and time information, the alarm settings on the glucose meter device **103**, the preferred display format for data display on the display unit of the user interface unit **203** in the meter device **103**, the concentration unit of the generated glucose level, and an average glucose level information based on a user selected number of days such as 14-day or 30 day average of stored results.

In the measurement log review mode of operation discussed above, the glucose meter device **103** is configured to display a glucose summary (that is, the average glucose level information) of stored results, as well as other parameters such as the number of measurements incorporated into the displayed average level, and a visual indication to the user that the displayed data is the average glucose level information, and not a specific sampled glucose level data. As will be discussed in further detail below, the glucose meter device **103** may be configured to enter the measurement log review mode of operation upon the operation of the mode switch (in the user interface unit **203**) while the meter device **103** is in the default clock mode.

In one embodiment, the glucose meter device **103** may be configured so that a "LO" is displayed for measured glucose values which are below 20 mg/dL, and in contrast, a "HI" is displayed when the measured glucose value exceeds 500 mg/dL. Furthermore, the meter device **103** may be configured to display the processed glucose level within approximately 15 seconds from the sampling of the corresponding blood for samples below 200 mg/dL when measured at room temperature and humidity.

FIG. **3** illustrates the glucose meter device of FIG. **2** in accordance with one embodiment of the present invention. As shown, the glucose meter device **103** includes a housing **307** which substantially encases the meter device **103**. In one embodiment, the glucose meter device **103** may be physically configured such that it is 3.12 inches in length, 2.25 inches in width and 0.85 inches in height, with no more that 1.4 ounces in weight with the batteries installed. Moreover, the material used for the housing **307** may comprise plastic, metal, polymer, or a combination of any suitable material which provides substantial physical integrity when subject to normal usage of the meter device **103** including occasional dropping and other physical impacts.

Also shown in FIG. **3** is a data port **301** which corresponds to the I/O interface unit **205** (FIG. **2**), and is configured to operatively couple to an external computer or data processing device to transfer data collected and processed by the glucose meter device **103**. The data port **301** in one embodiment may include one of a Universal Serial Bus (USB) port, an infrared data communication port, a Bluetooth communication port, and a Wi-Fi wireless data communication port (for example, IEEE 802.11 or its equivalents).

Referring back to FIG. **3**, provided on the housing **307** is a display screen **302** which may be configured to display the test results and other parameters and information such as time and data information and the like. The display screen **302** in one embodiment may include a built-in display backlight for use in low-light conditions, and may be configured to automatically switch on in low-light settings for a predetermined period of time (such as 1 minute, for example), or may be configured for manual user operation.

Also shown in FIG. **3** are three input switches—a mode switch **303**, the configuration switch **304**, and the light switch **305**. In one embodiment, the mode switch **303** may be operated by the user to toggle between different operation modes such as the test mode, and the clock mode (default), configuration mode, and the measurement log review mode, each discussed above. The configuration switch **304** may be configured to, for example, mark a test result as control solution, change the test strip code, time and alarm settings, the output sound options, date information, the measurement unit information, and for review of the stored sample results. Also, the configuration switch **304** may also be depressed to silence the output of an alarm. Finally, the light switch **305** is configured to control the operation of the backlight of the display screen **302**, as well as the flashlight function of the meter device **103**.

Referring yet again to FIG. **3**, a test strip port **306** is additionally provided on the housing **307** of the glucose meter device **103**, and is configured to receive the insertion of a test strip **308**. In one embodiment, the test strip port **306** substantially corresponds to the test strip connector unit **202** shown in FIG. **2**. Also provided on the test strip port **306** is a light source such as a light emitting diode (LED) and the like which is configured to switch on and off under the operation of, for example, the light switch **305**, or alternatively, in accordance with a certain operations of the glucose meter device **103** such as, for example, the detection of the test strip **308** at the opening of the test strip port **306**. As can be further seen, the test strip **308** may include a top portion **309** and a bottom portion **310** such that the top portion **309** is configured to be inserted into the test strip port **306** of the glucose meter device **103**, while the bottom portion **310** of the test strip **308** substantially comprises the blood sample target areas for the user to apply the blood sample or a control solution thereto. In one

embodiment, the test strip **308** is a Freestyle® Test Strip currently available from the assignee of the present application, Abbott Diabetes Care Inc. of Alameda, Calif.

FIGS. **4**A and **4**B illustrate the display screen of the glucose meter device in accordance with one embodiment of the present invention. Referring to the Figures, the display screen **302** of the glucose meter device shown in FIG. **3** includes a plurality of visual representation of display information. For example, as shown in FIG. **4**A, the check owner's manual symbol **401** is displayed to alert the user **101** (FIG. **1**) to refer to the manual of the glucose meter device, and may be displayed on the display screen **302** when, for example, the meter device detects LO or HI blood glucose level, out of temperature range results, and low power state. The control solution test result symbol **302** is displayed to alert the user that the user has marked a test result as a control solution test.

Referring back to FIG. **4**A, the message area **403** of the display screen **302** may be configured to display information such as the date information, the time information, the number of tests performed, and other information related to the operation and function of the glucose meter device. There is also provided in the display screen **302** a test result area **406** which is configured to display the resulting glucose level determined from the corresponding blood sample. Also shown in FIG. **4**A are a battery symbol **405** and a memory mode symbol **404**, where the battery symbol **405** is configured to be illuminated when the power supply level (e.g., the battery level) is detected to be lower than the optimum operating level, and to alert the user **101** (FIG. **1**) to replace the same. The memory mode symbol **404** on the other hand, is configured to display to the user **101** (FIG. **1**) that the test result displayed in the rest result area **406** has been stored in the memory (the storage unit **207** (FIG. **2**)) of the glucose meter device. In one embodiment, the memory capacity of the meter device may store up to approximately 250 blood glucose test results.

Referring now to FIG. **4**B, the display screen **302** may further be configured to display a blood drop symbol and a test strip symbol **414**, which are configured to operate in tandem to alert the user that the meter device is ready to apply the blood sample or the control solution. Moreover, the unit symbol **413** is configured to appear with the test result data displayed in the test result area **406** of the display screen **302** when the blood sample has been successfully collected and a corresponding glucose level has been determined based on the collected blood sample. The date setup symbol **407** on the display screen **302** may be displayed in the configuration mode when the user is setting the date information of the glucose meter device.

As further shown, a check and set test strip code symbol **408** is provided on the display screen **302** to alert the user to check and set the test strip code, while the thermometer symbol **409** is displayed on the display screen **302** when the meter is operating in a temperature range that is beyond that which will permit an accurate reading. A set of sound level symbols **410** are provided in one embodiment to indicate whether the glucose meter device audible output alert mode is at a predetermined setting (for example, high, low or off), while the time set symbol **411** appears on the display screen **302** in the default clock mode when the user is setting the time information on the glucose meter device. Finally, the data average symbol **412** is configured to appear on the display screen **302** with a glucose reading that is the average value of the readings from the past 14 days, for example or any other predetermined time period as may be established by the meter device as a default mode or by the user during calibration stage of the glucose meter device.

In the preferred embodiment of the present invention, when the meter **103** is not otherwise in use, the current date is continuously displayed on the upper line (top row of five 7-segment digits) of message area **403**, and the current time is continuously displayed on the lower line (bottom row of five 7-segment digits) of message area **403**. As previously mentioned, immediately after a blood glucose test is completed, the numerical result is shown in the test result area **406**. In this preferred embodiment, the date and time information are displayed in a different area of display screen **302** from the glucose test results, and with different sized digits (preferably smaller as shown). Also, it is preferable that the test result area **406** be offset from the center of display screen **302**, even more preferably located in a corner of the display screen **302** as shown.

In the manner described above, the display screen **302** of the glucose meter device in accordance with one embodiment of the present invention may be configured to display information corresponding to the glucose tests and the processed results in a easy and intuitive manner.

FIG. **5** is a flowchart illustrating the procedure for performing a blood glucose test using the glucose meter device in accordance with one embodiment of the present invention. Referring to FIGS. **2** and **5**, at step **501**, the glucose meter device detects the insertion of a test strip **102** in the test strip connector unit **202** (FIG. **2**). In response to the detection of the test strip **102** insertion, the meter device **103** is powered on, and at step **502**, the inserted test strip is verified and a self test of the meter device is performed. More specifically, at step **502**, a system check illumination briefly lights up the entire display screen **302** and the various data symbols and areas included therein, and thereafter, in step **503** the user **101** is prompted to input a code number which corresponds to the calibration code number preassigned to the test strip inserted into the meter device.

After verifying the code number for the test strip, at step **504**, the blood drop and test strip symbols **414** (FIG. **4**B) are displayed on the display screen **302** to prompt the user to apply the blood sample to the test strip. When the blood sample is in contact with the test strip, the test strip acts like a sponge and pulls the blood into the strip through its edges. Thereafter at step **505**, it is determined whether the collected blood sample amount is sufficient to generate a corresponding blood glucose level. If it is determined at step **505** that the collected blood sample amount is not sufficient to generate the corresponding blood glucose level, then the procedure returns to step **504** to prompt the user to further apply the blood sample to the test strip.

On the other hand, if it is determined at step **505** that the collected level of blood sample is sufficient to generate the corresponding blood glucose level, the user **101** (FIG. **1**) is notified as such in step **506** by an audible alert sound output via the user interface **203** (e.g., through an output speaker), and/or by visual display on the display screen **302** (FIG. **3**). The glucose meter device is then configured at step **507** to determine the glucose value corresponding to the detected blood sample, and thereafter at step **508**, to display the resulting glucose value on the display screen **302** (FIG. **3**), and to store the generated glucose value in the storage unit **207** (FIG. **2**).

In one embodiment, the glucose meter device may be configured to output a single audible alert notification when the collected blood sample is sufficient to generate the corresponding glucose level information, and to output a double audible alert notification when the glucose level information has been determined and displayed on display screen **302**. Additionally, in one embodiment, the time and date informa-

tion may also be displayed on the display screen **302** in connection with the generated glucose level information.

In accordance with another embodiment, the glucose meter device may be configured such that upon power on procedure, the light source (e.g., an LED) at the test strip port **306** (FIG. **3**) is configured to illuminate at substantially 50% of the full intensity to permit the introduction of the test strip **102** into the test strip port **306**. Thereafter, when the test strip **102** is fully inserted into the test strip port **306** of the glucose meter device, the light source at the test strip port **306**, and alternatively, in addition to the backlight of the display screen **302**, is illuminated at the full intensity level to indicate blood sample collection operation.

When the collection of the blood sample is concluded, the intensity of the light source at the test strip port **306** (and alternatively, as well as the backlight of the display screen **302**) are reduced substantially to the 50% level again, and when the test strip is removed from the test strip port **306**, the light source is configured to shut off completely. Indeed, as the light source (e.g., the LED) may be pulsed and still display substantially the same light output as one which is turned on in steady state, the battery life of the glucose meter device may be prolonged since the pulsed LED light source requires significantly less power (and thus draining the battery at a much slower rate) than when the LED light source is maintained at the on position. Indeed, in one embodiment, the central processing unit **206** of the glucose meter device **103** may be configured to control the switching on and off of the light source as well as the level of light intensity by, for example, adjusting the duty cycle and the period during which the light source is configured to be turned on. For example, FIG. **6** illustrates the output LED power level as a function of the power state in accordance with one embodiment of the present invention. As can be seen from the Figure, 50% duty cycle as shown on the X-axis corresponds to approximately 80% of the output power level for the LED light source.

In a preferred embodiment, a yellow/green LED is used for the test strip light, such as part number LT19209-40 manufactured by Ledtech Electronics Corporation located in Hsin-Tien, Taiwan, or part number ZSG56W manufactured by SunLED Co. located in Kowloon, Hong Kong. These LEDs provide a light having a peak wavelength of about 575 nanometers, which has been found to provide optimal contrast between various colors of blood against various skin pigments in low light conditions. More specifically, using a yellow-green LED with peak wavelength of 570 nanometers in one embodiment provided optional contrast between the various colors of blood against the skin pigments in low light conditions.

Also, preferably, the test light LED is pulsed faster than 60-100 hertz so that it appears to the human eye that it is continuously on without flickering, most preferably 3 or 7 khz. It has been discovered that a 10% duty cycle with the LEDs specified above provides the most desired balance between light intensity and battery power savings. A brighter light output than this can be disruptive in certain low light settings, such as a movie theater, and can inhibit inconspicuous blood glucose testing.

In an alternate embodiment of the present invention, the glucose meter device may be configured such that the backlight on the display screen **302** is turned on when the test strip **102** is inserted into the test strip port **306** of the meter device. Thereafter, the backlight is configured to turn off when the blood drop and test strip symbols **414** are displayed in tandem to alert the user that the meter device is ready to apply the blood sample or the control solution. At the same time that the backlight is turned off, the light source at the test strip port **306** (e.g., the LED light source) is illuminated so that the user may light up the test strip **102** and the sample acquisition site on the user **101** if desired. Thereafter, when the meter device detects a sufficient level of blood sample on the test strip **102** (i.e., step **505** (FIG. **5**) is successfully performed), the light source at the test strip port **306** is disabled, and the backlight on the display screen **302** is once again illuminated so that the user may view the corresponding glucose level generated from the collected blood sample.

In a slightly different embodiment, pressing the light button **305** powers on either the display backlight or the test strip light, depending on what mode the meter is in. Pressing the light button **305** in non-test modes powers on the display backlight. The display backlight goes out when light button **305** is pressed again, or when the meter is inactive for 5 seconds. Pressing the light button when the blood drop and test strip symbols appear on the display screen powers on the test strip light. The test strip light goes out when the light button **305** is pressed again, or the meter receives the correct amount of blood for the test (i.e. the test strip is filled), or after 60 seconds of meter inactivity, or when the test strip is removed from the meter. Thus, in this embodiment, the test strip light cannot be activated unless there is a test strip inserted in the test strip port. If either the test strip light or the display backlight is used during the test mode, the backlight preferably powers on to show the test results after the measurement is complete.

Preferably, the glucose meter is powered by two coin cell batteries of a common size, such as CR2032. It is also preferable that one of the batteries is dedicated to powering the test strip light and display backlight, and the other is dedicated to powering the meter's processor and other functions. It may also be desirable to allow the meter to be placed in a "shelf mode" after final testing at the factory such that even with batteries inserted, nothing is shown on the display and the processor is in an energy saving sleep mode until one of the buttons is pressed or a test strip is inserted in the meter to resume normal operation.

In the manner described above, in accordance with the various embodiments of the present invention, the glucose meter device **103** is configured such that it is simple, intuitive and easy to use, permitting the user to perform the tests relatively discreetly, and is also easily used by third parties such as the user's physician, nurse, care giver or family member. Moreover, given the compact physical configuration, the glucose meter device **103** is substantially small, compact, sleek and readily portable by the user.

Various other modifications and alterations in the structure and method of operation of this invention will be apparent to those skilled in the art without departing from the scope and spirit of the invention. Although the invention has been described in connection with specific preferred embodiments, it should be understood that the invention as claimed should not be unduly limited to such specific embodiments. It is intended that the following claims define the scope of the present invention and that structures and methods within the scope of these claims and their equivalents be covered thereby.

What is claimed is:

1. An apparatus, comprising:

a compact housing including a blood glucose meter interface and a strip port coupled to the blood glucose meter interface, the strip port coupled to the housing to receive a glucose test strip;

a display unit coupled to the housing to display information related to a blood glucose measurement based on a sample from the glucose test strip;

an input unit disposed on the housing to provide one or more input functions;

a processing unit controlling the information displayed on the display unit in response to at least one of the one or more input functions, the processing unit operating in a clock mode, a test mode, a configuration mode, a review mode or in one or more combinations thereof;

a power source provided within the housing for providing power to the display unit and the processing unit;

a data port coupled to the housing for data transfer to an external device under the control of the processing unit; and

a memory unit storing instructions which, when executed by the processing unit, causes the processing unit to activate a light source to illuminate one or more of the display unit or the strip port, wherein when the light source is activated, the light source provides illumination for one or more of the display unit or the strip port at a reduced intensity during a first portion of an operation and at a full intensity during a second portion of the operation.

2. The apparatus of claim **1**, wherein the data port includes a universal serial bus (USB) port.

3. The apparatus of claim **1**, wherein the display unit includes one of a liquid crystal display (LCD), a touch sensitive screen, or a plasma display unit.

4. The apparatus of claim **1**, wherein the light source provides one or more of a backlight function or a flashlight function.

5. The apparatus of claim **1**, wherein the light source includes a light emitting diode (LED).

6. (Previously Previously) The apparatus of claim **1**, wherein the light source illuminates a blood sample acquisition site.

7. The apparatus of claim **6**, wherein the blood sample acquisition site is located substantially on the surface of a patient's skin.

8. The apparatus of claim **7**, wherein the surface of the patient's skin is positioned substantially at a predetermined angle from the direction of illumination from the light source.

9. The apparatus of claim **8**, wherein the predetermined angle is less than 90 degrees.

10. The apparatus of claim **6**, wherein the blood sample acquisition site is illuminated only during a sample acquisition process.

11. The apparatus of claim **1**, wherein the display unit illuminates upon detection of the glucose test strip insertion into the strip port.

12. The apparatus of claim **11**, wherein the display unit remains illuminated until the glucose test strip is removed from the strip port.

13. The apparatus of claim **1**, wherein the input unit includes an on/off switch.

14. The apparatus of claim **1**, wherein the processing unit analyzes one or more analyte related data received from an in vivo analyte sensor.

15. The apparatus of claim **1**, wherein the data port operatively couples to the external device under the control of the processing unit.

16. The apparatus of claim **15**, wherein the external device includes one or more of a server terminal, a desktop computer, a laptop computer, or a personal digital assistant (PDA).

17. The apparatus of claim **1**, further including an output unit coupled to the housing and operatively coupled to the processing unit to output an indication associated with one or more functions controlled at least in part by the processing unit.

18. The apparatus of claim **1**, further including an audible output unit coupled to the housing.

19. The apparatus of claim **18**, wherein the audible output unit is operatively coupled to the processing unit to output one or more audible signals.

20. The apparatus of claim **18**, wherein the audible output unit provides an alert associated with a predetermined event or a reminder.

21. The apparatus of claim **20**, wherein the predetermined event or reminder includes a schedule associated with performing blood glucose measurement.

22. The apparatus of claim **18**, wherein the audible output unit outputs an alarm indication having a predetermined audible characteristic.

23. The apparatus of claim **22**, wherein the predetermined audible characteristic includes one or more of a timing of output of the alarm indication relative to a backlight function provided by the light source, a series of audible tones, or a predetermined schedule for outputting the alarm indication.

24. The apparatus of claim **1** further including a memory unit operatively coupled to the processing unit, the memory unit storing the information related to the glucose measurements.

25. The apparatus of claim **1**, wherein the processing unit displays time and/or date information during the clock mode.

26. The apparatus of claim **1**, wherein the processing unit executes one or more routines related to blood glucose measurement during the test mode.

27. The apparatus of claim **1**, wherein the processing unit executes one or more routines to select a user preference for one or more configurable parameters of the device during the configuration mode.

28. The apparatus of claim **1**, wherein the processing unit provides stored glucose measurements for review during the review mode.

29. The apparatus of claim **1**, wherein the processing unit exits one or more of the modes when a predetermined period of non-activity/idle time has elapsed.

30. The apparatus of claim **1**, wherein the display unit outputs data as one or more of number, text, symbol or one or more combinations thereof.

31. The apparatus of claim **1**, wherein the data port includes one or more of an infrared data port, a Wi-Fi data port, or a Bluetooth protocol enabled data port.

32. The apparatus of claim **1**, further including an RF receiver provided in the housing and configured to receive a plurality of signals associated with a monitored analyte level from an analyte sensor, wherein the display unit displays data associated with the monitored analyte level.

33. The apparatus of claim **1**, wherein the processing unit controls a level of light intensity of the display unit.

34. The apparatus of claim **1**, wherein the reduced intensity is substantially 50% of the full intensity of illumination of the light source.

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